

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please cancel claims 1 through 17, 31, 37, 38 and 60 without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter therein.

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Canceled)
2. (Canceled)
3. (Canceled)
4. (Canceled)
5. (Canceled)
6. (Canceled)
7. (Canceled)
8. (Canceled)
9. (Canceled)
10. (Canceled)
11. (Canceled)
12. (Canceled)
13. (Canceled)

14. (Canceled)

15. (Canceled)

16. (Canceled)

17. (Canceled)

18. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[15]]~~19, wherein storing each of the at least one order records for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service comprises:  
storing the billing system order record; and  
storing the network order record.

19. (Currently Amended) ~~The method of claim 17, wherein updating each of the at least one order records to compensate for numbering changes comprises:~~A method for automatically provisioning and maintaining a network system for routing direct-dialed voice-band calls from a calling party telephone number over an Internet protocol (IP) network, the method comprising:

receiving a voice-over-Internet protocol (VOIP) service registration for a calling party telephone number;

automatically generating an order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service including

automatically generating a billing system order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service, and

automatically generating a network order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service;

storing the at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service;

managing the billing interaction for a billed account between at least one calling party telephone number and a billed telephone number;

synchronizing changes made to the stored at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service, between the network system and a billing system, due to calling party activations, disconnections and changes;

processing at least one call detail record including at least a terminating access identification (ID);

updating the billing system order record; and

updating the network order record.

20. (Currently Amended) ~~The method of claim 15, wherein synchronizing changes due to calling party activations, disconnections and changes between the network system and a billing system comprises:~~ A method for automatically provisioning and maintaining a network system for routing direct-dialed voice-band calls from a calling party telephone number over an Internet protocol (IP) network, the method comprising:

receiving a voice-over-Internet protocol (VOIP) service registration for a calling party telephone number;

automatically generating at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service;

storing the at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service;

managing the billing interaction for a billed account between at least one calling party telephone number and a billed telephone number;

synchronizing changes made to the stored at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service, between the network system and a billing system, due to calling party activations, disconnections and changes; and

processing at least one call detail record including at least a terminating access identification (ID);

said synchronizing changes due to calling party activations, disconnections and changes between the network system and a billing system includes

ensuring for each calling party telephone number registered for the VOIP service that the billing system order record and network order record both reflect the same numbering plan changes, activations, disconnections and other changes.

21. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[15]]~~20 further comprising:  
receiving a direct-dialed voice-band call to a destination number from ~~[[a]]~~ the calling party telephone number, the direct-dialed voice-band call being associated with ~~[[a]]~~ the destination number; and  
automatically routing the direct-dialed voice-band call to the destination number as a voice-over-Internet protocol (VOIP) telephone call if the calling party telephone number is registered for a VOIP service and if the destination number of the direct-dialed telephone call is accessible by the VOIP service.

22. (Original) The method of claim 21 further comprising:  
receiving a registration for the calling party's telephone number for the VOIP service prior to the calling party placing the direct-dialed telephone call.

23. (Original) The method of claim 22 further comprising:  
storing a VOIP service registration record for the calling party telephone number.

24. (Original) The method of claim 21 further comprising:  
storing an allowable destination number list, which identifies numbers accessible using the VOIP service, prior to the calling party placing the direct-dialed telephone call.

25. (Original) The method of claim 21, wherein automatically routing the direct-dialed voice-band call to the destination number a voice-over-Internet protocol (VOIP) telephone call if the calling party telephone number is registered for a VOIP service and the destination number of the direct-dialed telephone call is accessible by the VOIP service comprises:

determining if a VOIP service registration record for the calling party telephone number exists; and

if the VOIP service registration record for the calling party telephone number exists, determining if the destination number of the direct-dialed voice-band call is accessible by the VOIP service.

26. (Original) The method of claim 25 further comprising:

if the calling party's telephone number is registered for the VOIP service and if the destination number of the direct-dialed voice-band call is accessible by the VOIP service, receiving an indication to route the direct-dialed voice-band call over the IP network, otherwise, receiving an indication to route the direct-dialed voice-band call over a circuit-switched public switched telephone network (PSTN).

27. (Original) The method of claim 26 further comprising:

initiating a billing record for the direct-dialed voice-band call if the indication is to route the direct-dialed voice-band call over the IP network, wherein the billing record is associated with the calling party's telephone number.

28. (Original) The method of claim 27 further comprising:  
routing the direct-dialed voice-band call to the IP network.

29. (Original) The method of claim 28 further comprising:  
receiving notice of the direct-dialed voice-band call clearing.

30. (Original) The method of claim 29 further comprising:  
closing the billing record for the direct-dialed voice-band call.

31. (Canceled)

32. (Currently Amended) ~~The article of manufacture of claim 31 further comprising:~~ An article of manufacture comprising a computer-readable medium having stored thereon instructions adapted to be executed by a processor, the instructions which, when executed, define a series of steps to automatically provision and maintain a network system for routing direct-dialed voice-band calls from a calling party telephone number over an Internet protocol (IP) network, said steps comprising:

receiving a voice-over-Internet protocol (VOIP) service registration for a calling party telephone number;

automatically generating at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service;

storing the at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service;

managing the billing interaction for a billed account between at least one calling party telephone number and a billed telephone number;

synchronizing changes made to the stored at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service, between the network system and a billing system, due to calling party activations, disconnections and changes;

processing at least one call detail record including at least a terminating access identification (ID); and

updating the at least one order record to compensate for numbering plan changes.

33. (Currently Amended) The article of manufacture of claim [[31]]32, wherein said generating each of the at least one order records for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service step further comprises:

generating a billing system order record; and

generating a network order record.

34. (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 33, wherein said storing each of the at least one order records for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service step further comprises:

storing the billing system order record; and  
storing the network order record.

35. (Currently Amended) ~~The article of manufacture of claim 34, wherein updating each of the at least one order records to compensate for numbering plan changes step further comprises:~~ An article of manufacture comprising a computer-readable medium having stored thereon instructions adapted to be executed by a processor, the instructions which, when executed, define a series of steps to automatically provision and maintain a network system for routing direct-dialed voice-band calls from a calling party telephone number over an Internet protocol (IP) network, said steps comprising:

receiving a voice-over-Internet protocol (VOIP) service registration for the calling party telephone number;

automatically generating at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service including

generating a billing system order record;

generating a network order record;

storing the at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service including

storing the billing system record;

storing the network order record;

managing the billing interaction for a billed account between at least one calling party telephone number and a billed telephone number;

synchronizing changes made to the stored at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service, between the network system and a billing system, due to calling party activations, disconnections and changes;

processing at least one call detail record including at least a terminating access identification (ID);

updating the billing system order record; and  
updating the network order record.

36. (Currently Amended) ~~The article of manufacture of claim 34, wherein synchronizing changes due to calling party activations, disconnections and changes between the network system and a billing system step further comprises:~~ An article of manufacture comprising a computer-readable medium having stored thereon instructions adapted to be executed by a processor, the instructions which, when executed, define a series of steps to automatically provision and maintain a network system for routing direct-dialed voice-band calls from a calling party telephone number over an Internet protocol (IP) network, said steps comprising:

receiving a voice-over-Internet protocol (VOIP) service registration for the calling party telephone number;

automatically generating at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service including

generating a billing system order record;

generating a network order record;

storing the at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service including

storing the billing system record;

storing the network order record;

managing the billing interaction for a billed account between at least one calling party telephone number and a billed telephone number;

synchronizing changes made to the stored at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service, between the network system and a billing system, due to calling party activations, disconnections and changes including ensuring for each calling party telephone number registered for the VOIP service that the billing system order record and network order record both reflect the same numbering plan changes, activations, disconnections and other [[changes]]changes; and



processing at least one call detail record including at least a terminating access identification (ID).

37. (Canceled)

38. (Canceled)

39. (Currently Amended) ~~The apparatus of claim 38,~~ An apparatus comprising:  
a first voice-band switch; and  
a database coupled to the first voice-band switch;  
the first voice-band switch being configured to receive a direct-dialed voice-band call  
from a calling party's telephone number and to automatically designate the direct-dialed voice-  
band call as a voice-over-Internet protocol (VOIP) call;  
the first voice-band switch being further configured to automatically route the direct-  
dialed voice-band call using the VOIP service when the direct-dialed voice-band call is  
designated as a VOIP call; and

the first voice-band switch ~~[[is]]~~being an electronic switching system (ESS) originating assist switch (OAS), the database ~~[[is]]~~being a universal subscriber data structure (USDS) and the first voice-band switch ~~[[is]]~~being communicatively linked to an IP gateway.

40. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim ~~[[38]]~~39, wherein the first voice-band switch is further configured to open a billing record for the VOIP call.

41. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim ~~[[37]]~~39, wherein the first voice-band switch is configured to automatically designate the direct-dialed voice-band call as the VOIP call if the database contains information that the calling party's telephone number is registered for a VOIP service and if a destination number of the direct-dialed voice-band call is accessible by the VOIP service.

42. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim ~~[[37]]~~39, wherein the first voice-band switch is further configured to route the VOIP call to an IP gateway for routing to an IP network, then to a destination IP gateway and then to a local access provider network for routing to a destination number of the direct-dialed voice-band call.

43. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:  
a first voice-band switch; and  
a database coupled to the first voice-band switch;  
the first voice-band switch being configured to receive a direct-dialed voice-band call  
from a calling party's telephone number and to automatically designate the direct-dialed voice-  
band call as a voice-over-Internet protocol (VOIP) call; and  
the first voice-band switch ~~[[is]]~~being further configured, if the database contains information that the calling party's telephone number is only registered for non-single-stage VOIP services or if the database contains information that the calling party's telephone number is registered for the single-stage VOIP service and the destination number of the direct-dialed voice-band call is inaccessible by the VOIP service, to automatically designate the direct-dialed voice-band call as a circuit-switched call; and to automatically route the direct-dialed voice-band call for routing as a circuit-switched call if the direct-dialed voice-band call is designated as a circuit-switched call.

44. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim ~~[[37]]~~39, further comprising:  
a provisioning system configured to automatically provision and maintain the network apparatus.

45. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:  
a first voice-band switch;  
a database coupled to the first voice-band switch; and  
a provisioning system configured to automatically provision and maintain the network  
apparatus;

the first voice-band switch being configured to receive a direct-dialed voice-band call from a calling party's telephone number and to automatically designate the direct-dialed voice-band call as a voice-over-Internet protocol (VOIP) call; and

wherein the provisioning system comprises:including

a network provisioning platform (NPP) configured to receive a voice-over-Internet protocol (VOIP) service registration for the calling party, to generate at least one order for the calling party's VOIP service, to store the at least one order for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service, to manage the interaction between a calling party's telephone number and a billed telephone number, and to update a plurality of service records to compensate for numbering plan changes;

a billing system coupled to the NPP, ~~wherein~~ the billing system ~~[[is]]being~~ configured to maintain at least one calling party's account information, to maintain the VOIP service, and to create bills based on usage, a terminating access ID and a calling plan uniform service order code (USOC); and

a customer service message system (CSMS) coupled to the NPP, ~~wherein~~ the CSMS ~~[[is]]being~~ configured to synchronize between the first voice-band switch and the database which is configured to store calling party telephone numbers that are registered for the VOIP service, USOC information and destination number information;

~~wherein~~ the NPP ~~[[is]]being~~ further configured to synchronize changes in the network system and the billing system due to calling party activations, disconnections and changes.

46. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 45, wherein the CSMS is further configured to administer in the database at least one of ~~the group including~~ a country code field, a destination telephone number field, and a destination code field.

47. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim ~~[[38]]~~39 further comprising:  
a second voice-band switch coupled to the first voice-band switch, wherein the second voice-band switch is configured to receive the automatically routed direct-dialed voice-band call from the first voice-band switch, to forward the direct-dialed voice-band call for transmission as a VOIP call, and to open a billing record for the VOIP call.

48. (Original) The apparatus of claim 47, wherein the first voice-band switch is further configured, if the database contains information that the calling party's telephone number is only registered for non-single-stage VOIP services or if the database contains information that the calling party's telephone number is registered for the single-stage VOIP service and the destination number of the direct-dialed voice-band call is inaccessible by the VOIP service, to automatically designate the direct-dialed voice-band call as a circuit-switched call; and to automatically route the direct-dialed voice-band call for routing as a circuit-switched call if the direct-dialed voice-band call is designated as a circuit-switched call.

49. (Original) The apparatus of claim 47, wherein the second voice-band switch is further configured to route the direct-dialed call to an IP gateway for routing to an IP network, then to a destination IP gateway and then to a local access provider network for routing to a destination number of the direct-dialed voice-band call.

50. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:

a first voice-band switch being configured to receive a direct-dialed voice-band call from a calling party's telephone number and to automatically designate the direct-dialed voice-band call as a voice-over-Internet protocol (VOIP) call, and to automatically route the direct-dialed voice-band call using the VOIP service when the direct-dialed voice-band call is designated as a VOIP call;

a database coupled to the first voice-band switch; and

a second voice-band switch coupled to the first voice-band switch, the second voice-band switch being configured to receive the automatically routed direct-dialed voice-band call from the first voice-band switch, to forward the direct-dialed voice-band call for transmission as a VOIP call, and to open a billing record for the VOIP call;

the first voice-band switch [[is]]being an electronic switching system (ESS) originating assist switch (OAS), the second voice-band switch [[is]]being an ESS handoff assist switch (HAS), the database [[is]]being a universal subscriber data structure (USDS) and the second voice-band switch [[is]]being communicatively linked to an IP gateway.

51. (Original) The apparatus of claim 48, wherein the first voice-band switch is further configured to automatically route the direct-dialed voice-band call as a circuit-switched call if the direct-dialed voice-band call is to be routed as a circuit-switched call.

52. (Original) The apparatus of claim 48, further comprising:  
a provisioning system configured to automatically provision and maintain the network apparatus.

53. (Original) The apparatus of claim 52, wherein the provisioning system comprises:

a network provisioning platform (NPP) configured to receive a voice-over-Internet protocol (VOIP) service registration for the calling party, to generate at least one order for the calling party's VOIP service, to store the at least one order for the calling party's VOIP service, to manage the interaction between a billed telephone number and a calling party's telephone

number, and to update a plurality of calling party records to compensate for numbering plan changes;

a billing system coupled to the NPP, wherein the billing system is configured to maintain at least one calling party's account information, to maintain the VOIP service, and to create bills based on usage, a terminating access ID and a calling plan uniform service order code (USOC); and

a customer service message system (CSMS) coupled to the NPP, wherein the CSMS is configured to synchronize between the first voice-band switch and the database which is configured to store calling party telephone numbers that are registered for the VOIP service, USOC information and destination number information;

wherein the NPP is further configured to synchronize changes in the network system and the billing system due to calling party activations, disconnections and changes.

54. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 53, wherein the CSMS is further configured to administer in the database at least one of ~~the group including~~ a country code field, a destination telephone number field, and a destination code field.

55. (Currently Amended) An apparatus[[,]] comprising:

an electronic switching system (ESS) originating assist switch (OAS), the OAS being configured to receive a direct-dialed voice-band call from a calling party's telephone number, the direct-dialed voice-band call being associated with a destination telephone number, to determine whether to route the direct-dialed voice-band call over an Internet protocol (IP) network or a circuit-switched network, and, if it is determined to route the direct-dialed voice-band call over the IP network, the OAS is configured to transmit the direct-dialed voice-band call to the IP network, or, if it is determined to continue to route the direct-dialed voice-band call over the circuit-switched network, the OAS is configured to transmit the direct-dialed voice-band call to the circuit-switched network; and

an universal subscriber data structure (USDS) coupled to the ESS OAS, the USDS being configured to store service information on a plurality of calling party telephone numbers, to store information on which destination telephone numbers are accessible using a voice-over-Internet protocol (VOIP) service, to receive the calling party's telephone number and the destination telephone number of the direct-dialed voice-band call from the OAS, to determine if the calling party's telephone number is registered for the VOIP service, and, if the calling party's telephone number is registered for the VOIP service, to determine if the destination telephone number is accessible using the VOIP service, and to return a partial routing instruction and service information to the OAS.

56. (Original) The apparatus of claim 55 further comprising:

an ESS handoff assist switch (HAS) coupled to the OAS, wherein the HAS is configured to receive the direct-dialed voice-band call and to route the direct-dialed voice-band call to the VOIP network if the calling party's telephone number is registered for the VOIP service.

57. (Original) The apparatus of claim 55 further comprising:

a provisioning system configured to automatically provision and maintain the network apparatus.

58. (Original) The apparatus of claim 55 further comprising:

a network provisioning platform (NPP) configured to receive a voice-over-Internet protocol (VOIP) service registration for the calling party, to generate at least one order for the calling party's VOIP service, to store the at least one order for the calling party's VOIP service, to manage the billing interaction for a billed account between at least one calling party telephone number and a billed telephone number, to update a plurality of calling party records to compensate for numbering plan changes, and to synchronize changes made to the stored at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service, between the network system and a billing system, due to calling party activations, disconnections and changes;

a billing system coupled to the NPP, wherein the billing system is configured to maintain at least one calling party's account information, to maintain the VOIP service, and to create bills based on usage, a terminating access ID and a calling plan uniform service order code (USOC); and

a customer service message system (CSMS) coupled to the NPP, wherein the CSMS is configured to synchronize between the first voice-band switch and a database configured to store calling party telephone numbers, USOC information and destination number information.

59. (Original) The apparatus of claim 55, wherein the CSMS is further configured to administer a country code field which is stored in the database.

60. (Canceled)

61. (Currently Amended) ~~The system of claim 60,~~ A system for automatically provisioning and maintaining a network system for routing direct-dialed voice-band calls from a calling party telephone number over an Internet protocol (IP) network, the system comprising:  
a network provisioning component configured to receive a voice-over-Internet protocol (VOIP) service registration for the calling party telephone number, to generate at least one order record for a calling party telephone number's VOIP service, to store the at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service, to manage the billing interaction for a billed account between at least one calling party telephone number and a billed telephone



number, and to update the at least one order record to compensate for numbering plan changes;  
a billing system component coupled to the network provisioning component, the billing  
system component being configured to maintain at least one calling party's account information,  
to maintain the VOIP service, to create bills based on usage, terminating access ID and calling  
plan uniform service order code (USOC); and

a customer service message system (CSMS) component coupled to the network  
provisioning component, the CSMS component being configured to synchronize changes made  
to the stored at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service,  
between at least one telecommunications switch and a database, which stores calling party  
telephone numbers that are registered for the VOIP service, USOC information and destination  
number information;

the network provisioning component being further configured to synchronize changes  
made to the stored at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP  
service, between the network system and a billing system, due to calling party activations,  
disconnections and changes; and

~~wherein~~ the CSMS component ~~[[is]]~~ being further configured to administer a country code  
field which is stored in the database.

62. (Currently Amended) The system of claim ~~[[60]]~~61 further comprising:  
a first voice-band switch; and  
a database coupled to the first voice-band switch;  
the first voice-band switch being configured to receive a direct-dialed voice-band call  
from a calling party's telephone number and to automatically designate the direct-dialed voice-  
band call as a voice-over-Internet protocol (VOIP) call.

63. (Original) The system of claim 62, wherein the first voice-band switch is  
further configured to automatically route the direct-dialed voice-band call using the VOIP service  
when the direct-dialed voice-band call is designated as a VOIP call.

64. (Original) The system of claim 63, wherein the first voice-band switch is an electronic switching system (ESS) originating assist switch (OAS), the database is a universal subscriber data structure (USDS) and the first voice-band switch is communicatively linked to an IP gateway.

65. (Original) The system of claim 62, wherein the first voice-band switch is further configured to open a billing record for the VOIP call.

66. (Currently Amended) ~~The system of claim 64, wherein~~ A system for automatically provisioning and maintaining a network system for routing direct-dialed voice-band calls from a calling party telephone number over an Internet protocol (IP) network, the system comprising:

a network provisioning component configured to receive a voice-over-Internet protocol (VOIP) service registration for a calling party telephone number, to generate at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service, to store the at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service, to manage the billing interaction for a billed account between at least one calling party telephone number and a billed telephone number, and to update the at least one order record to compensate for numbering plan changes;

a billing system component coupled to the network provisioning component, the billing system component being configured to maintain at least one calling party's account information, to maintain the VOIP service, to create bills based on usage, terminating access ID and calling plan uniform service order code (USOC);

a customer service message system (CSMS) component coupled to the network provisioning component, the CSMS component being configured to synchronize changes made to the stored at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service, between at least one telecommunications switch and a database, which stores calling party telephone numbers that are registered for the VOIP service, USOC information and destination number information;

a first voice-band switch; and

a database coupled to the first voice-band switch;

the network provisioning component being further configured to synchronize changes made to the stored at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service, between the network system and a billing system, due to calling party activations, disconnections and changes;

the first voice-band switch being configured to received a direct-dialed voice-band call from a calling party's telephone number and to automatically designate the direct-dialed voice-band call as a voice-over-Internet protocol (VOIP) call;

the first voice-band switch being further configured to automatically route the direct-dialed voice-band call using the VOIP service when the direct-dialed voice-band call is designated as a VOIP call;

the first voice-band switch being an electronic switching system (ESS) originating assist switch (OAS), the database is a universal subscriber data structure (USDS) and the first voice-band switch is communicatively linked to an IP gateway; and

the first voice-band switch [[is]]being further configured to automatically route the direct-dialed voice-band call as a circuit switched call if the direct-dialed voice-band call is to be routed as a circuit switched call.

67. (Currently Amended) ~~The system of claim 64 further comprising:~~ A system for automatically provisioning and maintaining a network system for routing direct-dialed voice-band calls from a calling party telephone number over an Internet protocol (IP) network, the system comprising:

a network provisioning component configured to receive a voice-over-Internet protocol (VOIP) service registration for a calling party telephone number, to generate at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service, to store the at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service, to manage the billing interaction for a billed account between at least one calling party telephone number and a billed telephone number, and to update the at least one order record to compensate for numbering plan changes;

a billing system component coupled to the network provisioning component, the billing system component being configured to maintain at least one calling party's account information, to maintain the VOIP service, to create bills based on usage, terminating access ID and calling

plan uniform service order code (USOC);

a customer service message system (CSMS) component coupled to the network provisioning component, the CSMS component being configured to synchronize changes made to the stored at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service, between at least one telecommunications switch and a database, which stores calling party telephone numbers that are registered for the VOIP service, USOC information and destination number information;

a first voice-band switch;

a database coupled to the first voice-band switch; and

a second voice-band switch coupled to the first voice-band switch, wherein, if the direct-dialed voice-band call is being routed as a VOIP call, the second voice-band switch is configured to receive the direct-dialed voice-band call from the first voice-band switch, open a billing record for the VOIP call, and to forward the direct-dialed voice-band call for transmission as a VOIP [[call.]]call;

the network provisioning component being further configured to synchronize changes made to the stored at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service, between the network system and a billing system, due to calling party activations, disconnections and changes;

the first voice-band switch being configured to receive a direct-dialed voice-band call from a calling party's telephone number and to automatically designate the direct-dialed voice-band call as a VOIP call;

the first voice-band switch being further configured to automatically route the direct-dialed voice-band call using the VOIP service when the direct-dialed voice-band call is designated as a VOIP call; and

the first voice-band switch being an electronic switching system (ESS) originating assist switch (OAS), the database is a universal subscriber data structure (USDS) and the first voice-band switch is communicatively linked to an IP gateway.

68. (Currently Amended) ~~The system of claim 64 further comprising:~~ A system for automatically provisioning and maintaining a network system for routing direct-dialed voice-band calls from a calling party telephone number over an Internet protocol (IP) network, the system comprising:

a network provisioning component configured to receive a voice-over-Internet protocol (VOIP) service registration for a calling party telephone number, to generate at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service, to store the at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service, to manage the billing interaction for a billed account between at least one calling party telephone number and a billed telephone number, and to update the at least one order record to compensate for numbering plan changes;

a billing system component coupled to the network provisioning component, the billing system component being configured to maintain at least one calling party's account information, to maintain the VOIP service, to create bills based on usage, terminating access ID and calling plan uniform service order code (USOC);

a customer service message system (CSMS) component coupled to the network provisioning component, the CSMS component being configured to synchronize changes made to the stored at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service, between at least one telecommunications switch and a database, which stores calling party telephone numbers that are registered for the VOIP service, USOC information and destination number information;

a first voice-band switch;

a database coupled to the first voice-band switch; and

a provisioning system configured to automatically provision and maintain the network apparatus;

the network provisioning component being further configured to synchronize changes made to the stored at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service, between the network system and a billing system, due to calling party activations, disconnections and changes

the first voice-band switch being configured to receive a direct-dialed voice-band call from a calling party's telephone number and to automatically designate the direct-dialed voice-

band call as a VOIP call; and

the first voice-band switch being further configured to automatically route the direct-dialed voice-band call using the VOIP service when the direct-dialed voice-band call is designated as a VOIP call; and

the first voice-band switch being an electronic switching system (ESS) originating assist switch (OAS), the database is a universal subscriber data structure (USDS) and the first voice-band switch is communicatively linked to an IP gateway.

69. (Currently Amended) ~~The system of claim 65,~~ A system for automatically provisioning and maintaining a network system for routing direct-dialed voice-band calls from a calling party telephone number over an Internet protocol (IP) network, the system comprising:

a network provisioning component configured to receive a voice-over-Internet protocol (VOIP) service registration for a calling party telephone number, to generate at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service, to store the at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service, to manage the billing interaction for a billed account between at least one calling party telephone number and a billed telephone number, and to update the at least one order record to compensate for numbering plan changes;

a billing system component coupled to the network provisioning component, the billing system component being configured to maintain at least one calling party's account information, to maintain the VOIP service, to create bills based on usage, terminating access ID and calling plan uniform service order code (USOC);

a customer service message system (CSMS) component coupled to the network provisioning component, the CSMS component being configured to synchronize changes made to the stored at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service, between at least one telecommunications switch and a database, which stores calling party telephone numbers that are registered for the VOIP service, USOC information and destination number information;

a first voice-band switch; and

a database coupled to the first voice-band switch;

the network provisioning component being further configured to synchronize changes

made to the stored at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service, between the network system and a billing system, due to calling party activations, disconnections and changes;

the first voice-band switch being configured to receive a direct-dialed voice-band call from a calling party's telephone number and to automatically designate the direct-dialed voice-band call as a VOIP call;

the first voice-band switch being further configured to open a billing record for the VOIP call; and

~~wherein~~ the first voice-band switch ~~[[is]]being~~ an electronic switching system (ESS) originating assist switch (OAS), the second voice-band switch ~~[[is]]being~~ an ESS handoff assist switch (HAS) and the database ~~[[is]]being~~ a universal subscriber data structure (USDS).

70. (Currently Amended) ~~The system of claim 65,~~ A system for automatically provisioning and maintaining a network system for routing direct-dialed voice-band calls from a calling party telephone number over an Internet protocol (IP) network, the system comprising:

a network provisioning component configured to receive a voice-over-Internet protocol (VOIP) service registration for a calling party telephone number, to generate at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service, to store the at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service, to manage the billing interaction for a billed account between at least one calling party telephone number and a billed telephone number, and to update the at least one order record to compensate for numbering plan changes;

a billing system component coupled to the network provisioning component, the billing system component being configured to maintain at least one calling party's account information, to maintain the VOIP service, to create bills based on usage, terminating access ID and calling plan uniform service order code (USOC);

a customer service message system (CSMS) component coupled to the network provisioning component, the CSMS component being configured to synchronize changes made to the stored at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service, between at least one telecommunications switch and a database, which stores calling party telephone numbers that are registered for the VOIP service, USOC information and destination

number information;

a first voice-band switch; and

a database coupled to the first voice-band switch;

the network provisioning component being further configured to synchronize changes made to the stored at least one order record for the calling party telephone number's VOIP service, between the network system and a billing system, due to calling party activations, disconnections and changes

the first voice-band switch being configured to receive a direct-dialed voice-band call from a calling party's telephone number and to automatically designate the direct-dialed voice-band call as a VOIP call;

the first voice-band switch being further configured to open a billing record for the VOIP call; and

~~wherein~~ the first voice-band switch ~~[[is]]~~ being further configured to automatically route the direct-dialed voice-band call as a circuit switched call if the direct-dialed voice-band call is to be routed as a circuit switched call.